

CLAIMS

We claim:

- [c1]
 1. A method in a computing system for highlighting links to web sites that are of interest to a user, comprising:
 - displaying a first web page requested by a user from a web site;
 - receiving an indication from the user that the web site is of interest to the user;
 - in response to the indication from the user that the web site is of interest to the user:
 - determining the identity of the web site from the URL of the first web page; and
 - storing an entry corresponding to the web site in a list of web sites of interest,
 - at a time after the storing, receiving a request by the user for a second web page;
 - identifying within the second web page a link that points to the web site specified by the stored entry in the list of web sites of interest;
 - modifying the second web page to indicate that the identified link points to a web site of interest to the user; and
 - displaying the second web page as modified.

- [c2]
 2. A method in a computing system for identifying links to web sites that are of interest to a user, comprising:
 - displaying a first web page;
 - displaying a web site selection control in conjunction with the first web page;

in response to activation of the web site selection control by the user while the first web page is displayed:

creating a new entry corresponding to the first web page in a list of web sites of interest;

identifying a web site containing the first web page, and

storing in the created entry information specifying the identified web site;

at a time after the storing, receiving a request for a second web page;

identifying within the second web page a link that points to the web site specified by the created entry;

modifying the second web page to indicate that the identified link points to a web site of interest; and

displaying the second web page as modified.

[c3] 3. A method in a computing system for identifying links to web sites that are of interest to a user, comprising:

for each link in a web page requested by a user, determining whether the link points to a web site specified by any entry in a list of web sites of interest;

for each link in the web page determined to point to a web site specified by any entry in a list of web sites of interest, modifying the web page to identify the link as pointing to a web site of interest;

displaying the requested web page as modified;

displaying a web site selection control in conjunction with the requested web page; and

if the user activates the web site selection control while the requested web page is displayed:

identifying a web site containing the requested web page, and

storing a new entry containing the identified web site in the list of web sites of interest.

[c4] 4. A method in a computing system for analyzing a web page, comprising:

receiving the web page; and

for each link occurring in the web page, if the link points to a web site identified in a list of web sites indicated to be of interest, modifying the web page to identify the link as pointing to a web site of interest.

[c5] 5. The method of claim 4, further comprising displaying the modified web page.

[c6] 6. The method of claim 4, further comprising transmitting the modified web page to a computer system that requested the received web page.

[c7] 7. The method of claim 4 wherein the modification is performed as part of composing the web page.

[c8] 8. The method of claim 4 wherein the modification is performed as part of serving the web page.

[c9] 9. The method of claim 4 wherein the web page contains a search result comprised of search result items, and wherein at least one of the links identified by the modifying is within a search result item.

[c10] 10. The method of claim 4, further comprising adding a distinguished web site to the list in response to an indication that a user activated a displayed interest indication control while a web page within the distinguished web site was displayed.

[c11] 11. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computing system to analyze a web page by:

receiving the web page; and
for each link occurring in the web page, if the link points to a web site explicitly indicated by a user as being of interest, modifying the web page to identify the link as pointing to a web site of interest.

[c12] 12. A method for processing a web page, comprising:

receiving the web page;
determining whether the web page is part of a web site identified in a list of web sites indicated to be of interest; and
if the web page is part of a web site identified in a list of web sites indicated to be of interest, displaying the web page in a manner that indicates that the web page is part of a web site indicated to be of interest.

[c13] 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the displaying comprises displaying within the web page a promotional offer not received with the web page.

[c14] 14. The method of claim 12, further comprising displaying a control usable by the user to indicate that a web site to which a presently-displayed web page belongs is of interest, and wherein displaying the web page comprises modifying the display of the control to indicate that the web page belongs to a web site indicated to be of interest.

[c15] 15. A method in a computing system for tracking web sites, comprising:
displaying in conjunction with a browser window a control for indicating interest in web sites;
receiving an indication that a user has activated the control during the display of a distinguished web page in the browser window;
in response to receiving the indication:

identifying a web site with which the distinguished web page is associated; and

adding the identified web site to a list of web sites that have been indicated by the user to be of interest.

[c16] 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising, when a link to a web page associated with the identified web site is displayed in the browser window at a time after the adding, highlighting the link.

[c17] 17. The method of claim 15, further comprising, when a link to a web page associated with the identified web site is displayed in the browser window at a time after the adding, displaying a promotion for the identified web site in conjunction with the link.

[c18] 18. The method of claim 15 wherein the control is a button.

[c19] 19. The method of claim 15 wherein the control is a button in a toolbar.

[c20] 20. The method of claim 15 wherein the activated control is one of a plurality of buttons, each button of the plurality corresponding to a different list of web sites that have been indicated by the user to be of interest, and wherein the identified web site is added to the list of web sites to which the activated control corresponds.

[c21] 21. The method of claim 20 wherein each button of the plurality corresponds to a list of web sites relating to a different user interest, a different browsing mode, or a different subject matter.

[c22] 22. The method of claim 21, further comprising:
 displaying in conjunction with the browser window a second control
 for bookmarking a web page;
 receiving an indication that the user has activated the second control
 during the display of the distinguished web page in the browser window; and
 in response to receiving the indication that the user has activated the
 second control, adding the distinguished web page to a list of web pages that have
 been bookmarked, the list of web pages that have been bookmarked being distinct
 from the list of web sites that have been indicated by the user to be of interest.

[c23] 23. The method of claim 21 wherein the browser window is displayed by
 a browser program, the method further comprising:
 in response to the display of the distinguished web page in the
 browser window, adding the distinguished web page to a list of web pages visited
 by the browser program, the a list of web pages visited by the browser program
 being distinct from the list of web sites that have been indicated by the user to be
 of interest.

[c24] 24. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computing
 system to track web sites by:
 during the display of a distinguished web page in the browser
 window, receiving an user input event associated with a web site tracking
 command;
 in response to receiving the user input event:
 identifying a web site with which the distinguished web page is
 associated; and
 adding the identified web site to a list of web sites that have
 been selected for tracking by a user.

[c25] 25. One or more computer memories collectively storing a user-interest data structure, the user-interest data structure comprising a plurality of entries, each entry identifying a web site explicitly indicated by a user to be of interest during the display of a web page within the identified web site, the entry not identifying the web page within the identified web site,

such that the contents of the user-interest data structure may be used to highlight displayed information that relates to a web site identified by one of the entries.

[c26] 26. The computer memories of claim 25, further storing a favorite web pages data structure, the favorite web pages data structure being distinct from the user-interest data structure and comprising a plurality of entries, each entry identifying a web page explicitly indicated by a user to be a favorite web page,

such that the contents of the favorite web pages data structure may be used to quickly visit a web page identified by one of the entries.

[c27] 27. The computer memories of claim 25 wherein the user-interest data structure further comprises information associating each entry with one of a plurality of entry groups,

such that information associating each entry with one of a plurality of entry groups may be used to highlight displayed information that relates to a web site identified by a selected entry in different manners based upon which group of entries the selected entry is associated with.

[c28] 28. The computer memories of claim 25 wherein the user-interest data structure further comprises information associating each entry with one of a plurality of entry groups,

such that information associating each entry with one of a plurality of entry groups may be used to highlight displayed information that relates to a web

site identified by a selected entry only if the group of entries the selected entry is associated with is selected for highlighting when the information is displayed.

[c29] 29. The computer memories of claim 25 wherein the computer memories are physically attached to a computer system used by the user to display information.

[c30] 30. The computer memories of claim 25 wherein the computer memories are physically attached to a computer system through which information to be displayed to the user passes.

[c31] 31. The computer memories of claim 25 wherein the computer memories are physically attached to a computer system at which information to be displayed to the user originates.

[c32] 32. A method in a computing system for analyzing a search result, comprising:

receiving a search result comprised of a set of entries each corresponding to a web site;

accessing a list of web sites indicated to be of interest; and

for each entry, if the web site to which the entry corresponds is included in the list, modifying the search result to identify the entry as corresponding to a web site of interest.

[c33] 33. The method of claim 32, further comprising receiving user input specifying that the search result is to be modified to identify entries as corresponding to a web site of interest, and wherein the modifying is performed in response to receiving the user input.

[c34] 34. The method of claim 32 wherein the modifying is performed automatically, irrespective of any user input.

[c35] 35. The method of claim 32 wherein the entries of the received search result are arranged in an initial order, and wherein the search result is modified by reordering the entries in the search result into a second order such that the entries corresponding to web sites included in the list occur at the beginning of the second order.

[c36] 36. The method of claim 32 wherein the search result is modified by highlighting each entry corresponding to a web site included in the list.

[c37] 37. The method of claim 32 wherein the search result is modified by, for each entry corresponding to a web site included in the list, adding to the entry an icon representing the web site to which the entry corresponds.

[c38] 38. The method of claim 32 wherein the search result is modified by, for each entry corresponding to a web site included in the list, adding to the entry a promotion for the web site to which the entry corresponds.

[c39] 39. The method of claim 32 wherein the search result is modified by, for each entry corresponding to a web site included in the list, adding to the entry an indication of the time at which the web site to which the entry corresponds was added to the list.

[c40] 40. The method of claim 32, further comprising displaying the modified search result.

[c41] 41. The method of claim 35 wherein the modified search result is displayed in a web browser, and wherein the modifying is performed using a web browser add-on operating in conjunction with the web browser.

[c42] 42. The method of claim 35 wherein the modified search result is displayed in a web browser, and wherein the modifying is performed by the web browser.

[c43] 43. The method of claim 32, further comprising transmitting the modified search result to a client computer system from which the received search result was requested.

[c44] 44. The method of claim 32, further comprising composing the list of web sites of interest in response to explicit expressions of interest by a user.

[c45] 45. The method of claim 32 wherein the list of web sites of interest is derived from a set of bookmarked web sites.

[c46] 46. The method of claim 32 wherein the list of web sites of interest is derived from a web browser history.

[c47] 47. The method of claim 32, wherein the accessed list of web sites includes web sites indicated to be of interest with respect to a first topic and web sites indicated to be of interest with respect to a second topic, and wherein the search result is modified to explicitly identify entries as corresponding to web sites of interest with respect to the first or second topic.

[c48] 48. The method of claim 32, further comprising accessing a second list of web sites indicated to be of interest that is separate from the list of web sites indicated to be of interest, and wherein the search result is modified to identify

entries as corresponding to a web site on the list of web sites indicated to be of interest or as corresponding to a web site on the second list of web sites indicated to be of interest.

[c49] 49. A method in the computing system of selectively presenting promotional offers with respect to a subject web site, comprising:

when a page of the subject web site is displayed, receiving user input identifying the web site to which the page belongs as being of interest; and
in response to receiving the user input, displaying a promotional offer for the subject web site.

[c50] 50. The method of claim 49 wherein the displaying is performed immediately in response to the user input.

[c51] 51. The method of claim 49 wherein the displaying is performed at a time after the user input is received.